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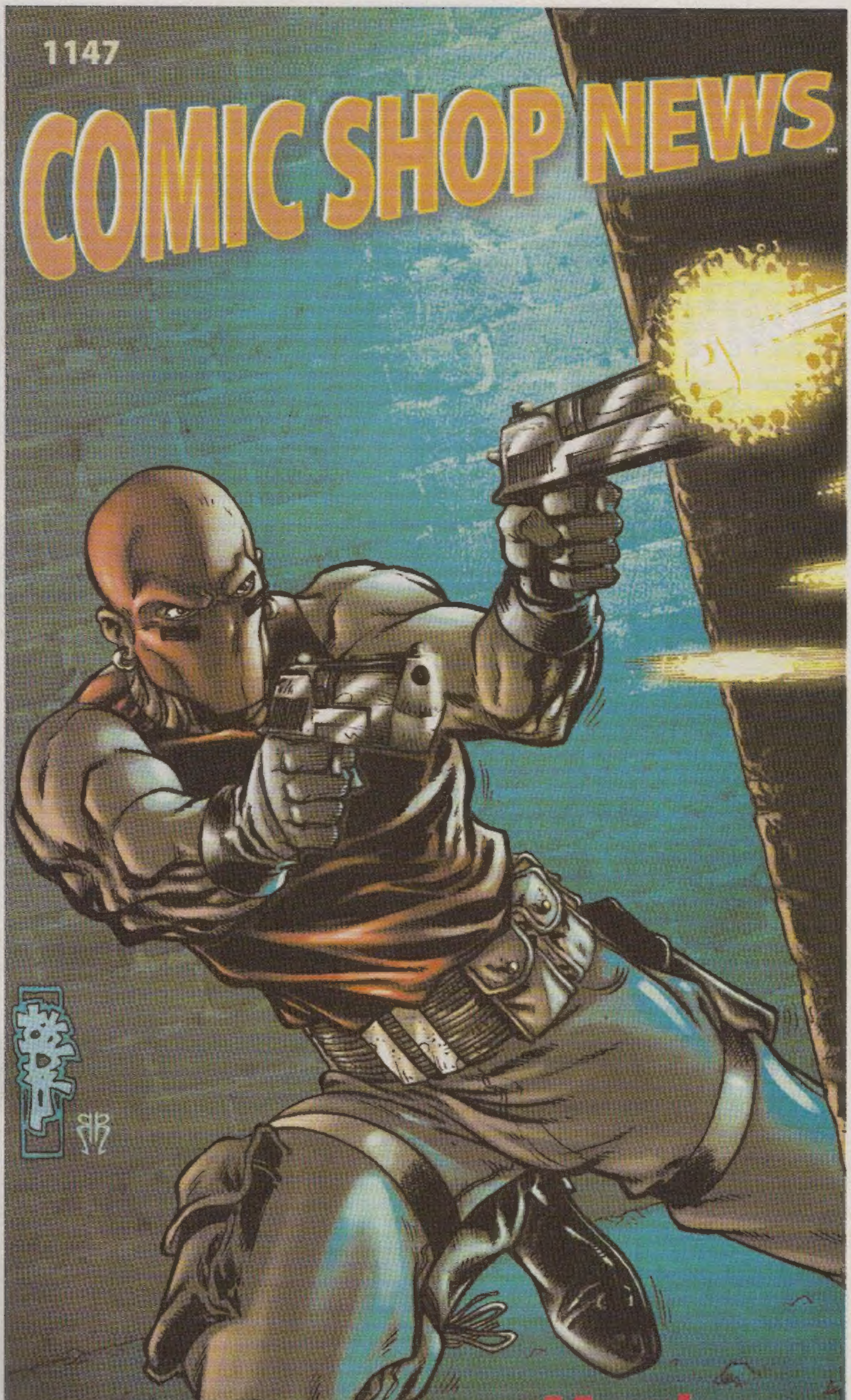
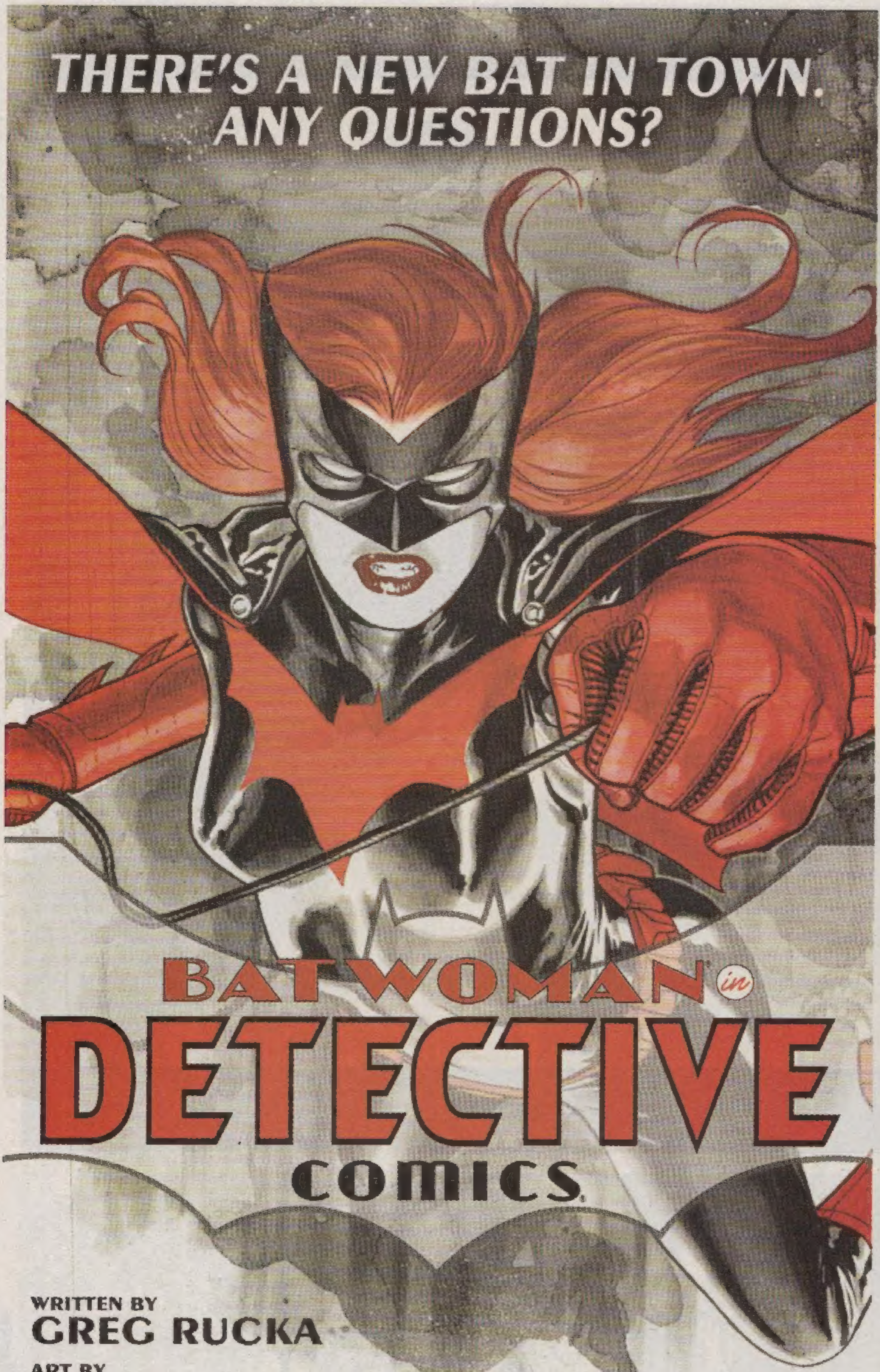


Mayhem



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JUNE 2009

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Tyrese Gibson Unleashes Mayhem at Image

Talk about a modern-day Renaissance man! *Tyrese Gibson*, the hit R&B and rap singer and songwriter who went on to further fame as an actor in such films as ***Transformers, Death Race,*** and ***2 Fast 2 Furious,*** is now turning his attention to another creative medium. And comics fans can enjoy the fruits of his labor later this summer, when ***Mayhem*** ensues.

Tyrese Gibson's Mayhem, a three-part miniseries produced by Gibson with *Mike Le, William Wilson, & Tone Rodriguez,* is a gritty costumed hero adventure with an urban edge. So what led a successful musician and actor to venture into the field of comics as well?

"The VP of my production company, *Mike Le*, is a huge comic book fan and reader," Gibson said. "Over a year ago, Mike first mentioned to me that he wanted our company to publish a comic book. I was interested in the idea, but because I was so busy shooting back-to-back movies, I didn't give it anymore thought than that.

"Then I went to Comic-Con for the ***Death Race*** panel and I was struck by the energy not only in the room, but from the whole convention center. It was obvious these fans were very passionate and I found it inspiring. It made me want to be apart of what they're experiencing. That's when I really started to get excited about putting out a comic book."

Gibson doesn't pretend to be a lifelong comics fan. "I would be lying if I told you I am a comic book veteran. I am not an experienced comic book reader, and I know the comic book fans are really tough critics when it comes to celebrities or outsiders who claim to be one of them when they're not. But I hope the fans will at least appreciate that I am learning to love comic books. Most people discover comics at a young age, so I understand I have a lot of catching up to do. But I am excited to dive into that world and absorb as much as possible.

"I've met with some important people, from *Avi Arad* to the local store owners, just to pick their brains and take in their advice. I also threw a bowling party at the Lucky Strikes in Downtown Los Angeles, where I invited all of the local top comic book talents. Everyone from *Chip Mosher* (Boom Studios), *Mark Sable* (***Unthinkable***), *Jeff Katz* (***Booster Gold***), *Jonathan Davis* (***Eureka***), to the Oni Press guys were all there. And I had them mixing with the likes of *Michael Bay, Taraji P. Henson, and Tia Tequila.*

"I also went down to the Diamond warehouse and met with the entire staff, gave them ***Mayhem*** t-shirts and took pictures—you know, build the morale and give them something to smile about. I wanted to see *everything*, from how they shipped the comic books to the people who take all the orders. As you can see, I'm dead serious about being a comic book creator. Another reason I was motivated to create a comic book is because I am a visual guy, and after reading a few comics I realized they were just like movies—but on the page."

What did Gibson read to prepare him for his role as co-creator of ***Mayhem?*** "I've read some of ***The Punisher, Daredevil,*** and ***Batman*** to start off with as research for ***Mayhem,*** because my character is also a masked vigilante and I wanted to see and feel the tone of that type of character. I went down to our local comic book store and basically told the manager to give me some of his best graphic novels—so I have a stack on my desk waiting for me that includes ***The New Avengers, Kingdom Come,*** and ***Captain America.***

"There is so much out there and sometimes I don't even know where to start! If any of your readers want to recommend any titles for me, I welcome all suggestions. They can hit me up on Twitter at Tyrese4real."

How did Gibson & Image join forces? "The relationship with Image came to us through *Will Wilson*, who apparently is good friends with *Robert Kirkman*. It's been an absolute joy working with Image. *Robert Kirkman* and *Eric Stephenson* have giving us amazing input during the creative process, and I look forward to continuing my relationship with Image."

This isn't the first partnership for Gibson and Le. "I've known *Mike Le* for close to eight years," Gibson said. "He's the VP of my film & TV production company, HQ Pictures. He's basically my producing partner and he has his hands in all the films, TV shows, and other projects that my company is developing. Mike and I have also written scripts together, so he understands my sense of storytelling, and vice versa. Mike introduced me to Will, and I instantly thought he was a good guy with a smart business sense."

While Gibson is a comics newcomer, Le has been a fan of the art form for many years. "I discovered both comics and film at the same time when I was a kid. The very first film I saw in the theatre was the original ***Star Wars...*** totally blew my mind and changed me forever. I remember this vividly. I staggered out of the theatre with my parents, shell-shocked by this amazing experience. On the way out, we walked by the concession stand and I saw they were selling the Marvel adaptation of ***Star Wars*** next to the M&M's and Snickers. I threw a tantrum until my parents gave in and bought me a copy. I read that thing at least a thousand times. So that was pretty much my childhood: movies and comic books, and I guess that's been pretty much my entire life.

"Fast forward to now, where I'm the VP of Tyrese's film & TV production company. Over the last few years there's been an emergence of a 'geek squad' in Hollywood—a handful of executives and producers who are basically fanboys at heart and are really tapped into the worlds of comic books, video games, anime, etc. This Hollywood geek squad is the bridge between comic books and films, and soon I found myself in that mix. So once again, my two passions converge and I'm in a position to create both.

"As Hollywood's love affair with comic books grew stronger, and Tyrese was getting more and more offers to do comic book properties, it was a no-brainer to me that we should create our own property and control it. Of course everything is multi-media and multi-platform, but our first and most important goal is build the best and strongest foundation from which everything else can spring from, and that means creating the best comic book possible.

"So about a year ago, I started with meeting people specifically to talk about creating a comic book around Tyrese's brand. That's when I met *Will Wilson*, who's the CEO of Arch-Enemy and has done work for Ape Entertainment. We hit it off right away... When I eventually introduced Will to Tyrese—and I'll never forget this—Will put his arm around Tyrese and said, 'They want you to *play* Luke Cage, but they don't want you to *own* Luke Cage." I knew right then that Will was the perfect guy for us to team up with."

How did artist *Tone Rodriguez* become a part of the creative team? "Will brought Tone on board," Gibson said. "They've worked together before on several projects at Ape Entertainment. Tone is an incredible artist and the first time I saw his portfolio, I knew instantly he was the guy to bring ***Mayhem*** to life. And we're glad that he's definitely committed to the entire project. I wouldn't have it any other way."

Mike Le explained how ***Mayhem*** first came about. "It happened during our first meeting, when Tyrese initially met Will and Tone. Tyrese was flipping through Tone's portfolio and he saw an early design for a character who was, at

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

the time, called The Enforcer," Le said. "Tyrese responded to the strong look of the character and we all agreed this was our character. So Tone tweaked the character to fit the specifications Tyrese, Will, and I came up with.

"We didn't like the name The Enforcer, but didn't have an alternative and we were deep into the writing process at the time. I remember, Will and I were at the café working up the treatment and our brains were about to explode from all the crazy action scenes we were concocting. Will took a breath and said, 'Man, this is complete mayhem.' That's when a light bulb just went off and we knew our character would be called *Mayhem*."

Gibson explained the premise of the limited series. "Mayhem is a modern-day Robin Hood, a masked vigilante who steals from crime-bosses and street gangsters and uses that money to fund his campaign against crime. His Arch-rival is a kingpin named Big X. Big X basically has a choke-hold on the Los Angeles underworld, and his corruption reaches through every level of the city, from the drug-dealers to the police. Mayhem's mission is to take out Big X... but there's a dark secret that links them together."

Is it possible that *Mayhem* might continue after this three-issue miniseries wraps up? "I *always* like to think big picture," Gibson said. "If the fans enjoy *Mayhem*, then I would have to give them more!"

Will Gibson be able to commit himself to the project on a long-term basis, should it continue? "Yes, I am definitely 200% committed to being a part of the creative team of *Mayhem*, and any other future comic book projects I may do," Gibson said. "I know historically, comic book fans are cynical whenever a celebrity created title is announced—and that's understandable, because most celebrities are just looking for a quick check or to publish something just to create an intellectual property. Not me—I'm trying to create a great comic book product for the hardcore fans to enjoy. I'm not even thinking about setting up *Mayhem* as a movie, a videogame, or any other form of merchandising. Right now, I am living and breathing *Mayhem* as a comic book. That's it. I'm trying to make comic book fans happy. This is their world, and I'm the one dipping into it. I know I have to earn their respect, and I am more than willing to put in the time and effort to gain it. "

Reader can pay a visit to Gibson's comic book world in August, when *Tyrese Gibson's Mayhem #1* is slated for release from Image Comics.

by Cliff Biggers

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COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

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An Incredible Return

Okay, this is gonna be complicated?

Remember ***Incredible Hulk***, the series that was replaced on Marvel's schedule by ***Hulk***, and which point the former book metamorphosed into ***Incredible Hercules?***

Well, ***Incredible Hulk*** is on its way back... but neither ***Hulk*** nor ***Incredible Hercules*** is going away in the process. Furthermore, ***Incredible Hulk*** is returning with #600, even though the Hulk hasn't appeared in 600 books thus far (the entire run of ***Tales to Astonish*** is being counted to get to that number, for instance, even though the Hulk first appeared in ***Tales to Astonish #59***).

Greg Pak, who's been busy lately chronicling the adventures of the Hulk's savage son in the pages of ***Skaar***, is returning to the greenskinned goliath when ***Incredible Hulk*** rejoins the Marvel lineup. "My last Skaar issue is #12, which features the long awaited showdown between Skaar and the Hulk right here on planet Earth -- and Central Ohio will never be the same," Pak told *Comic Shop Newsarama's Matt Brady*. "Sorry, Buckeyes! Then writer *Paul Jenkins* and penciller *Andres Guinaldo* take over the book, which is retitled ***Son of Hulk*** with issue #13 and launches a tremendous new storyline that no one's gonna see coming.

"Meanwhile, *Fred Van Lente* and I are continuing to co-write ***Incredible Hercules***. Issue #131 finishes up our 'Underworld' storyline and reintroduces a major player to the Herc Universe. And with issues #132 and #133, we plunge into a whole new status quo for Hercules and Amadeus (did someone say 'Thorcules'?)."

Pak's first issue of ***Incredible Hulk*** will actually be ***#601***, since #600 continues some of the storylines from the current ***Hulk*** series by *Jeph Loeb & Ed McGuinness*. "***Incredible Hulk #601*** springs out of Jeph and Ed's mind-blowing ***Incredible Hulk #600*** and the momentous events of ***Skaar #12*** and launches a brand new ***Hulk*** series written by yours truly with art by the brilliant *Ariel Olivetti*," Pak explained. "Those same insane events will reverberate thunderously through Jeph and Ed's ***Hulk*** book starting with issue #13. That's right, Marvel fans -- the Hulk's story has become so huge he's taking over two big books!

"This is the first giant climax of the insane plans Jeph and I have been cooking up from the beginning. We're about to pay off some huge mysteries and emotional storylines in some of the biggest ways you can imagine -- so dontcha dare miss a single issue!"

Pak explained the relationship between Skaar and Bruce Banner, who both play important parts in ***Incredible Hulk***. "Skaar was literally born in fire in the explosion that killed his mother at the end of ***Planet Hulk***. He blames his father -- who never knew he survived -- for all of the horrors he suffered in the barbaric, war-torn world that Planet Sakaar became after the Hulk left to wreak his vengeance upon Earth in ***World War Hulk***.

"But it remains to be seen exactly *whom* Skaar considers to be his father. Banner and Skaar might have a very different relationship from the Hulk and Skaar. And Skaar may have very different reactions to each of the different Hulk incarnations. There's a wealth of material to work with here, all of it fraught with emotional resonance and, conveniently enough, ample opportunities for massive amounts of smashing!"

And does Banner have any idea that he has a son? "My lips are sealed!" Pak said.

"All I can say is that ***Incredible Hulk #600*** and ***Skaar #12*** change the dynamic of all the Hulk characters who have been running around since Planet Hulk. But hang on one minute... is that Jumpin' *Jeph Loeb* I see?"

"What we *can* say is that ***Incredible Hulk #600*** starts with the end of ***World War Hulk!***" *Jeph Loeb* added. "So for those of you wondering just what happened between the end of Greg's run on ***Incredible Hulk*** and my start of ***Hulk***, all will be revealed. Or some will be. Or... well, I can't really say or the Red Hulk will smash me! But then it will all slingshot back around on into ***Incredible Hulk #601*** and ***Hulk #13***. Tricky bastards, ain't we?!"

"Be prepared for anything and anyone to make an appearance," Pak added. "In the first story arc, we're bringing a number of big, big characters back to the forefront who should bring a smile to any True Believer's face."

Pak is particularly pleased to be working with artist *Ariel Olivetti*. "I've had my eye on Ariel since I first saw his stuff in ***Punisher War Journal*** and was thrilled when editor *Mark Paniccia* told me we had him on board. Ariel clearly knows how to draw huge dudes and massive destruction. But he's also got an eye for the little details and is going to bring out the emotional elements and wry humor of the story brilliantly."

Incredible Hulk #600 is slated for July release, with #601 following in August.

Up and Atom with Rucka and Robinson

The good captain with power atomic is coming back this summer, with the help of *Greg Rucka* and *James Robinson*.

Captain Atom, who has been missing since ***Countdown*** came to a close, is making his return to the DC Universe in ***Action Comics #879***, where he'll star in the book's new backup co-feature. But is this the same Captain Atom we've known previously? And if so, where has he been since he was last seen as Monarch in ***Countdown***, after playing a role in the destruction of one of the many multiple earths?

Those are some of the questions that Rucka and Robinson will answer once the ongoing backup feature kicks off. The writers explained how the series came about, and what they have in the works. "The idea of the co-feature was put forward, and we'd always kicked around the idea of Captain Atom being a part of Superman's world, so that was a pretty obvious choice for a co-feature," Robinson told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Matt Brady*. "Also, Captain Atom fit the other criteria, which is that they should star characters who have a definite fan interest, but not enough, or the character isn't strong enough right now to maintain a monthly book.

"So he worked on a couple of levels. But the problem was that if we brought in another writer, it would be just one more piece of confusion. There's already three writers and

Geoff, in his ***Adventure Comics*** run will be involved, even though that's a little ways off. So it wasn't as if Greg and I were thinking 'Oh my God, we can't wait to add another ten more pages!' to our workloads, but the benefit of writing it ourselves outweighed the problems and confusion that adding another writer to the mix could have introduced. This way, we can keep it in our control."

Both writers are enthusiastic about the collaborative efforts on this series. "It's always energizing to work with really talented people," Rucka said, "and I find it easier when you've got a partner in crime, when you've got somebody you can bounce this stuff around with, and to talk about him like he's not here, the ideas just shoot forth out of James' head. We'll have conversations where we're trying to figure out where we want to take something or some character, and he'll throw out half a dozen very good ideas one after another – it's like watching a professional dealer in Vegas sliding cards to players on a table.

"When the ideas are moving that quickly, it's fun – you're on your toes, and it brings out your best game. I really think that's been evident in New Krypton, and when the issue of the co-feature came up, it was pretty clear how to go about doing it. James is doing the heavy lifting on this. I'm assisting on plots – he's doing the bulk of the work."

Robinson explained that it would actually take him longer to produce the stories if he was working on the book solo. "While Greg is very, very complimentary to me and my ideas, he does have a lot of ideas too—but also he has a grounding. If you read those entries in **52** - what the other writers talked about with Greg was that he wanted to make sure things got back down to the ground so things weren't all over the place. He was keeping track of the plotlines and making sure that everything was moving forward.

"So, if I were doing Captain Atom on my own, it would be a disaster. The intros weren't very hard to figure out, but as Captain Atom becomes a more ongoing part of the throughline of the books, Greg's going to be the lifesaver."

"I can tell you tight now that when the co-feature starts, the fan reaction is going to be 'What the —?'" Rucka added. "I think that there will be a contingent that will be ticked off by it – there's always that contingent who, when they find something different that's not explained immediately, they become furious. So the furious brigade will be burning us in effigy from the start, but it makes sense – there's a reason for it all."

"Just to be tantalizing, there's also a reason why, even though we had five pages of the first co-feature complete when they previewed it, we only wanted them to show one," Robinson said. "From the second page onward, it's *nothing* that you would expect."

"James is absolutely right," Rucka agreed. "You will turn that first page, and say, 'Okay – that ain't right.' In all sincerity, people will be wondering what we're doing, and what's going on... but it all will be explained."

Rucka and Robinson confirm that this is the same Captain Atom who has appeared in the DCU for years now. So is this a story of redemption after his role in ***Countdown?*** "I think it's very fair to say that, in many ways, this is a very redemptive story," Rucka said.

"Yes, absolutely," Robinson continued. "I don't know how much all the various things that he's gone through we'll refer to, but the idea that his life hasn't necessarily come out the way he intended, and this is his chance to get things right, now, is there.

"There was a time when he was a fantastic DC character, and he just somehow got lost along the way. We just want to bring him back and make him great again."

So what makes him fit so well in the Superman universe that he deserves an ongoing feature in one of DC's flagship Super-books? "There are two things," Robinson said. "One is that he never really felt like he belonged in the world of Barry Allen, Hal Jordan, and Oliver Queen. Obviously, he was part of the Justice League, but he was floating around. The idea of bringing him into Superman's world, in terms of his powers and his abilities makes sense – he's different from Superman, but immensely powerful.

"Also, he's very important in another way - one of the main villains were working with here is General Lane and Black Bag Op 7734, and we're sort of painting this gigantic brush of evil across the U.S. military. So it was important to us to have a military character who was a heroic good guy who shows that we don't think the entire military is bad, but rather there can be a bad general or a bad black bag op."

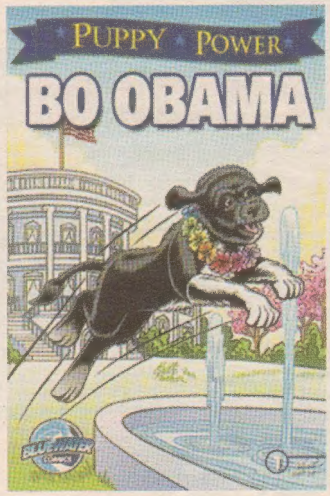
Witness Captain Atom's return beginning in ***Action Comics #879,*** on sale in mid-July.

CSNsider

•*Mark Waid's* ***The Unknown*** **#1** sold out of its first printing a week after release. Since reorders continue to stream in, Boom Studios is rushing the series back to press for a second edition, which will feature a black and white variant version of Paul Pope's art for the first issue. Look for it later this month.

•If you miss the married Peter and Mary Jane Parker, then you need to track down the ***Spider-Man*** comic strip; beginning on May 24th, the strip ended its flashback reversion to the unmarried Spidey by having Peter discuss a strange dream he'd had that he was still single... a dream he discussed with his wife, Mary Jane. Now the strip is back to married continuity.

HONEY, WHERE DID YOU LEAVE THE SHAMPOO?
WAS I DREAMING THEN--
--OR AM I DREAMING NOW?!
YOU GUESSED IT, TRUE BELIEVER! WE'VE DECIDED TO BOOT TO YOUR LOCAL COMIC SHOP TO HAVE PETER AND MARY JANE MARRIED AGAIN! SO BE HERE MONDAY TO FIND OUT--
WILL THE REAL PETER PARKER PLEASE STAND UP?



•Okay, we've had *Barack Obama* comics, we've had *Michelle Obama* comics... but are you ready for *Bo Obama* comics? In case you forgot, Bo is the presidential pup, and he'll be featured in ***Puppy Power: Bo Obama,*** a September-release comic from Bluewater Press produced by *Paul J. Salamoff & Keith Tucker.*

•Also coming from Bluewater in September is ***Political Power: Joe Biden,*** a biographical oneshot by *Wey-Yuih Loh & Jonathan Rector.* (We'd tell you all the book's secrets now, but Biden is likely to that himself prior to the book's release...)

•And just in case you're not in *Barack Obama* biographical comics overload yet, here's another book to add to the list: ***Political Power—Barack Obama,*** produced by *Chris War & Azim Akberall,* which is slated for August release from Bluewater.

•San Diego Comic-Con has announced the nominees for the 2009 Russ Manning Promising Newcomer Award.The nominees are:

Gregory Baldwin, for ***Path*** (published by com.x Ltd.)

Eleanor Davis, for ***Stinky*** (Raw Junior/Toon Books)

Leigh Kellogg, for Wayfarer's Moon (Single Edge Studios)

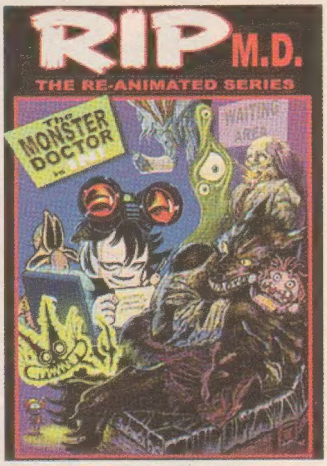
Lukas Ketner, for ***Witchdoctor*** (self-published)

Christian Slade, for ***Korgi*** (Top Shelf)

The winner (who will be announced at the Eisner Awards ceremony on July 24th at Comic-Con) will be chosen by past Manning award winners and *Russ Manning* assistants.

•Viz Media has confirmed that they are ending the four-year-old ***Shojo Beat*** with the July 2009 issue; the monthly shojo anthology series never found an audience to rival the readership of ***Shonen Jump,*** and the current economic turbulence had further eroded the magazine's readership. Viz intends to continue publishing graphic novels under the Shojo Beat imprint, however, so readers will still be able to enjoy the manga series that were featured in the magazine.

•*Art Spiegelman & Francois Mouly* have dug through decades of comic book gems to assemble ***The Toon Treasury of Classic Children's Comics HC,*** a 352-page oversized volume that focuses on comic *books,* not strips. The volume, which features material by such greats as *Carl Barks, Walt Kelly, Sheldon Mayer John Stanley,* and *Basil Wolverton,* features complete, self-contained stories ranging in length from single-page tales to full twenty-two-pagers. Look for it in August from Abrams.



•Fantagraphics has signed a deal to produce its first new project based on a licensed property (although they have produced reprint volumes featuring licensed characters). The first graphic novel based on *Lincoln Butterfield's* animation property ***RIP, M.D.,*** is slated for release in the first quarter of 2010. Created by *Mitch Schauer,* ***RIP M.D.*** stars Ripley Plimpt, a boy who not only learns that monsters are real, but that they also need a little assistance now and then. Ripley becomes known to monsters around the world as Rip, M.D. (Monster Doctor).

•In ***Days Missing,*** *Phil Hester & Frazer Irving* join forces to present the tale of a mysterious figure with the ability to wipe out entire days. It's not the man, but the days, that are the focus of this series, which reveals how his powers of time and intellect have allowed him to secretly remove certain critical days from the historical record. Their sto-

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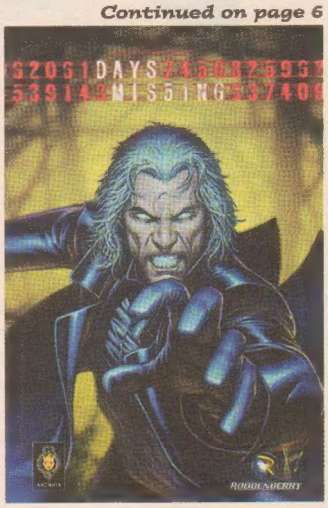
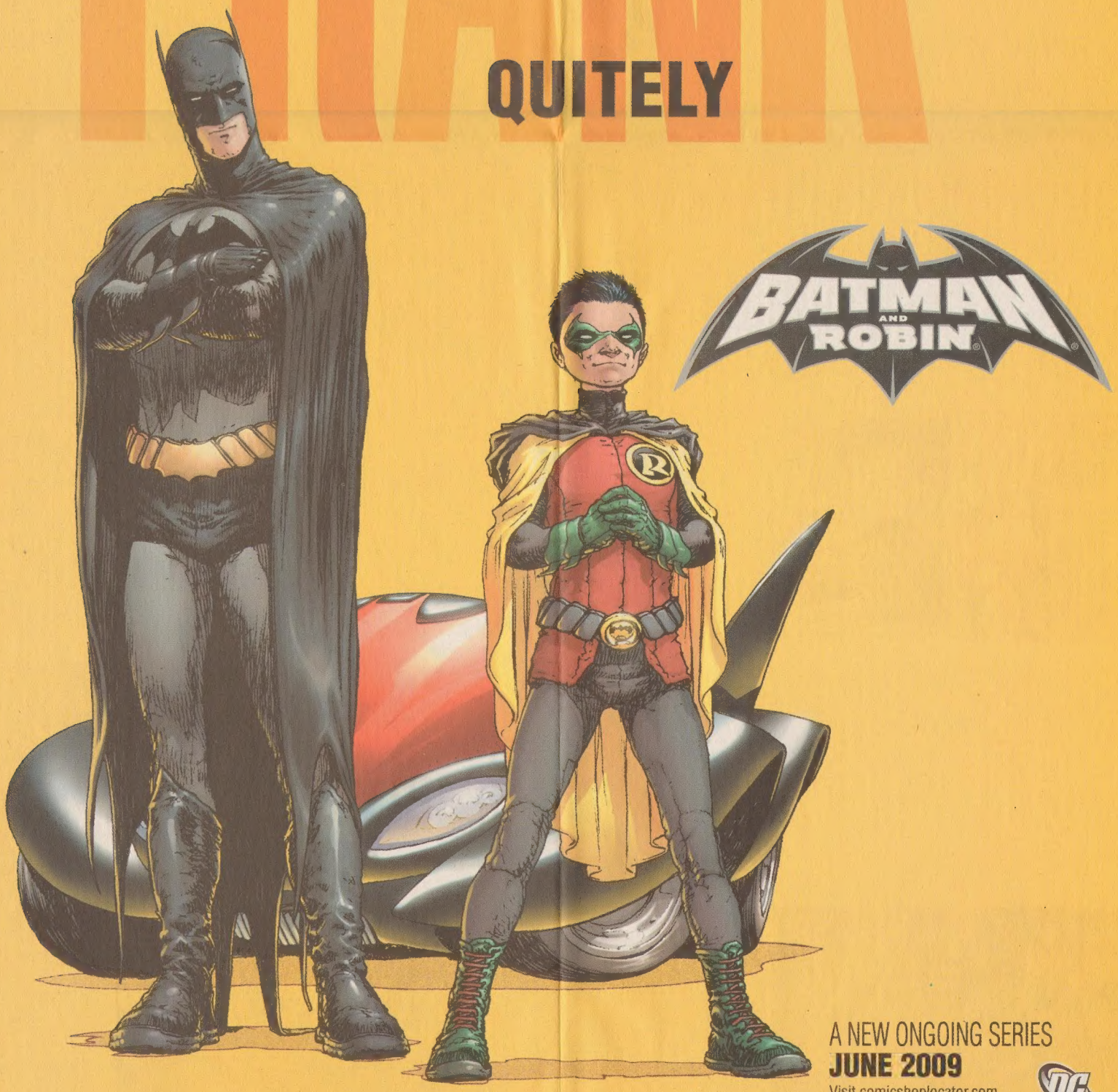


GRANT MORRISON

FRANK QUITELY



A NEW ONGOING SERIES

JUNE 2009

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ries have never been told. Their details have never been documented. Their existence is not remembered. But the occurrences of these days have forever changed the course of humanity's evolution. These are the days missing from our existence, and they are about to be revealed! This book will be released in a bargain priced 99¢ edition and a $2.99 edition with a 2500-copy limited edition cover by *Frazer Irving*.

•Sure, *Thomas Scioli* has been busy on ***Godland***, but he's still found time to knock out an all-new 120-page graphic novel continuing his ***Myth of 8-Opus***. In ***The Myth of 8-Opus: The Labyrinth***, slated for August release, 8-Opus and Daedalus embark on a star-spanning odyssey to expose a conspiracy of cosmic proportions.

•*Christos Gage*, a familiar name to readers of Marvel, IDW, and WildStorm, makes his Avatar Comics debut with ***Absolution #1***, illustrated by *Roberto Viacava*. The first issue introduces John Dusk, a superhero in a world where they're a sanctioned arm of law enforcement. But this veteran hero has been scarred by his exposure to man's infinite capacity for evil, and he's seen one too many perpetrators escape justice. One day he crosses the line by letting a murderer die... and discovers it feels good. Surrounded by sociopaths, both human and superhuman, who will prey on others if they're not stopped, Dusk's mission leads him inexorably to a collision course with his teammates Alpha and The Servant... not to mention his homicide detective girlfriend.

•*Andrew Cosby, Michael Alan Nelson, & Ayhan Hayrula* take readers back to feudal Japan in ***Swordsmith Assassin #1***. Toshiro Ono has spent his life making the best swords that have ever been forged and selling them to the highest bidder. But when his family is killed by a blade of his own making, Toshiro will do whatever it takes to make sure none of his swords ever kill again. *John Cassaday* and *Joe Corroney* supply the cover art for the first issue, which is slated for August release.

•*Keith RA DeCandido & Caleb Cleveland* focus on one of ***Farscape's*** greatest characters in the miniseries ***Farscape: D'Argo's Trial***. Before his life on Moya, Ka D'Argo struggled to keep his marriage to a Sebacean woman alive under Peacekeeper pressure. And when D'Argo is under pressure, something will explode...

•John McClane, comic book hero? You betcha! In August, *Howard Chaykin & Stephen Thompson* bring one of the most famous action-hero stars in film to a new medium in ***Die Hard: Year One***. In this tale, set more than a decade before the first *Die Hard* movie, he's just another rookie cop, an East Coast guy working on earning his badge in New York City during 1976's Bicentennial celebration... and the Summer of Sam. Too bad for John McClane, nothing's ever that easy. J

•*Megan Fox* is the star of the upcoming film ***Jennifer's Body***... and once you see the film, you're going to want to read the ***Jennifer's Body HC***, featuring new tie-in tales by *Rick Spears* illustrated by such artists as *Tim Seeley, Jim Mahfood, Nikki Cook, & Ming Doyle*.

•How did Robin of Loxley become Robin Hood? Why did he choose to fight injustice instead of robbing for his own gain? Find out in *Tony Lee, Sam Hart, & Artur Jujita's* ***Outlaw: The Legend of Robin Hood GN***, which retells the classic legend of Robin Hood. Look for it in August from Candlewick Press.

•*Alex Ross, Joe Casey, & Chasen Grieshop* introduce the new villain Blood Lust in ***Project Superpowers: Meet the Bad Guys #1***, the kickoff issue of a four-parter from Dynamite Press. So who is he and what's his connection to the Green Lama? You'll find out soon enough!

•Ashley J. Williams confronts a new sort of horror in ***Army of Darkness: Ash SAves Obama***, a four-parter by *Elliot Serrano & Ariel Padilla*. Ash has never seen anything as bizarre as a comic book convention—but this isn't just any con. This convention features a special appearance by Barack Obama... and the Necronomicon! Look for it in August from Dynamite Press.

•*Matt Wagner* does the design honors for Dynamite's ***Zorro 90th Anniversary Statue***, sculpted by *Tom & Joy Snyder*. This piece, which features the sword-wielding hero about to carve his Z into Sergeant Gonzales, stands 9" tall, 16" long, and 7" wide.

•Fantagraphics fills in a major hole in a comic strip connoisseur's library with the August release of ***Captain Easy, Soldier of Fortune: The Complete Sunday Newspaper Strips Volume One HC***, a full-color compilation of *Roy Crane's* memorable adventure strip.

•Now here's a must-have for *Stan Sakai* fans: Fantagraphics' ***Usagi Yojimbo: The Special Edition***, a two-volume slipcased set containing the first seven ***Usagi Yojimbo*** books... that's more than 1200 pages of anthropomorphic adventure, along with extras such as a full color cover gallery, behind-the-scenes art, a career-spanning interview, and more.

•Along with *Alex Raymond & Mac Raboy, Al Williamson* belongs to that elite group of artists who have perfectly captured the distinctive world of Flash Gordon in comics form. Later this summer, Flesk Publications celebrates Williamson's accomplishments in ***Al Williamson's Flash Gordon: A Lifelong Vision of the Heroic***. The volume, available in hardcover and softcover, collects all the major works of the artist featuring Flash Gordon, including Williamson's legendary King Comics stories from the 1960s, the 1980 adaptation of the Universal ***Flash Gordon*** motion picture, and the Marvel Comics miniseries of 1994. In addition, the volume features Williamson's Flash drawings done for commercial illustration and prints, his assists on the ***Flash Gordon*** comic strip, a variety of images for amateur publications, and a selection of largely unpublished images spanning his interest in the character from childhood to the conclusion of his career.

•IDW enlists the aid of such creators as *Arthur Adams, Kyle Baker, Howard Chaykin, Gene Ha, David Lloyd, J. Scott Campbell, Mark Schultz, Matt Wagner,* and *Bill Willingham* to produce ***Hero Comics—A Heroes Initiative Benefit Book***. In case you forgot, Heroes Initiative offers assistance to the industry's Golden and Silver Age greats, who didn't have the benefit of a pension or retirement plan.

•*John Ostrander & Tim Truman* pay a return visit to Cynosure in ***Grimjack: The Manx Cat***, a oneshot featuring a tale never before seen in print. Look for it in August from IDW.

•From ***Star Trek*** writer/producers *Roberto Orci & Alex Kurtzman* and *Mike Johnson, Tim Jones, & David Messina*—the creative team behind the best-selling prequel comic ***Star Trek: Countdown***—comes IDW's ***Star Trek: Nero***, an all-new story set within the events of the hit film! Not an adaptation, this exclusive story follows the villainous Nero as he seeks to destroy the Federation.

•Top Shelf compiles *Jeff Lemire's* award-winning trilogy ***Tales from the Farm, Ghost Stories,*** and ***The County Nurse*** in the 512-page ***The Complete Essex County HC***. Also included are more than fifty pages of previously unpublished material, including two new stories. Set in an imaginary version of Jeff Lemire's hometown, the trilogy offers an intimate study of a farming community and a tender meditation on family, memory, grief, secrets, and reconciliation.

•We've gotten used to *Roy Thomas* and crew offering one memorable bit of comics history after another in the pages of ***Alter Ego***—but they outdo themselves with ***Alter Ego #88***, which presents the first-ever in-depth look at National/DC's legendary founder, *Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson*, and early editors *Whitney Ellsworth, Win Sullivan,* and *Mort Weisinger*, with rare art and artifacts by *Siegel & Shuster, Bob Kane, Gardner Fox, Sheldon Moldoff*, and more. If you've ever had an interest in comics' history and heritage, this one's a must-have!

Coming Comics—Image in August

Dale Keown's classic hero Pitt makes his return to comics, and Keown is on hand to supply the visuals in ***The Darkness/Pitt #1***, the kickoff issue of a three-parter written by *Paul Jenkins*. When Tim and Pitt's mission to track down those infected by an alien virus brings them to Jackie's stomping ground in New York, they are invariably drawn together. Both attract the unwanted attention of the Federal Government and mayhem ensues!

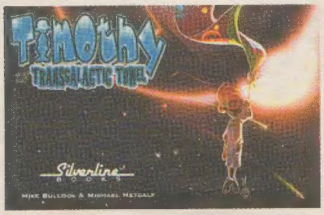
Jorge Lucas returns to supply the art for ***The Darkness #79***, joining *Phil Hester* for a memorable tale. Jackie Estacado, bearer of The Darkness, is through with being someone else's bag man and assembles a special team of thieves, smugglers, and murderers for one purpose – to take down The Sovereign.

Mini-Marvels creator *Chris Giarrusso* returns with ***G-Man: Cape Crisis***, a brand new five-part miniseries. When pieces of G-Man's magic cape fall into the wrong hands, things quickly spin out of control. G-Man and his friends must battle to recover the pieces—but this time the bad guys have the same power as G-Man!

Two monster children dig deep into their imaginations to become the weirdest creatures of all: humans! The brother and sister

duo Blarg and Clarg live in a cave in the crater of a live volcano, playing and pretending all day long. To them, their lava-filled bedroom is a plush carpeted floor, their dinner of critters and grubs a tasty meal of spaghetti and meatballs. While what they pretend may be ordinary to humans, it's fantastical and exotic to them—as you'll see in ***The Lava Is a Floor! HC*** by *Justin Shady & Jeremy R. Scott.*

For those who've avidly picked up each of Image's ***Ted McKeever LIbrary*** volumes, here's the perfect way to store them: ***The Ted McKeever Library Collector's Slipcase,*** a black slipcase with gold printing designed to preserve and display all three volumes in the series.



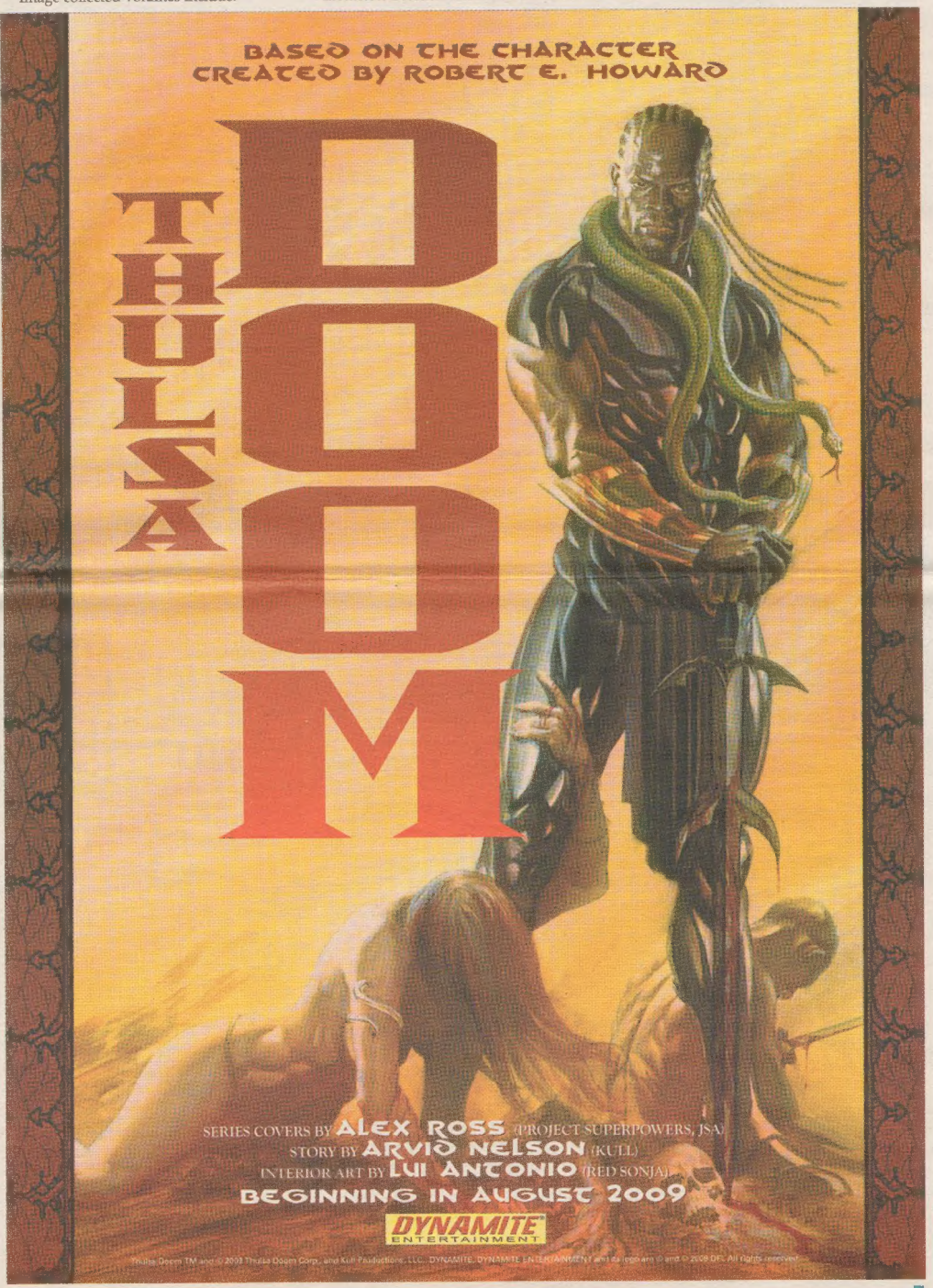
Timothy is a young boy being raised by his single father. His dad always has to go away on long business trips, but makes sure to bring home a special gift each time. His latest trip was to Hawaii, and he brought home a multi-colored beach towel. Timothy thinks the towel kind of sucks... until he discovers it can transport him to other worlds and times! See what happens next in *Mike Bullock & Michael Metcalf's* ***Timothy & the Transgalactic Towel.***

Pete falls in love with an alien he's forced to betray... Anna watches her boyfriend literally turn into the drug he's addicted to... and Joe has a cat that can become any tool or weapon. It's all just another day in *Brandon Graham's* ***King City,*** where mystery is down every alley... and weirdness is crawling through your window.

Los Angeles, the City of Fallen Angels, is a city swept up by a brutal crime wave led by a kingpin known only as Big X... and there's only one man who can stop him. He is the embodiment of vengeance and raw justice, and he goes by the name of Mayhem. Meet him in ***Tyrese Gibson's Mayhem #1,*** produced by *Mike Le, William Wilson, & Tone Rodriguez.* (See this issue's front page story for more info on this miniseries.)

Image collected volumes include:

- ***Cyblade: Agent of Cyberdata TP,*** collecting ***Cyblade #s 1-4*** and ***Cyblade: Pilot Season.***
- ***Elephantmen: Damaged Goods TP,*** collecting ***Elephantmen #s 18-20.***
- ***The Fantastic Worlds of Frank Frazetta Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the Frazetta-inspired ***Creatures, Dark Kingdom, Swamp Demon,*** and ***Dracula Meets the Wolf-Man.***
- ***Invincible Presents Atom Eve Collected Edition,*** a 48-page collection of the two-issue miniseries.
- ***Jersey Gods Volume 1: I'd Live & I'd Die for You TP,*** collecting ***Jersey Gods #s 1-5.***
- ***Killer of Demons TP,*** collecting ***Killer of Demons #s 1-3.***
- ***The Walking Dead Volume 10: What We Become TP,*** collecting ***Walking Dead #s 55-60.***


BASED ON THE CHARACTER
CREATED BY ROBERT E. HOWARD
THULSA DOOM
SERIES COVERS BY ALEX ROSS (PROJECT SUPERPOWERS, JSA)
STORY BY ARVID NELSON (KULL)
INTERIOR ART BY LUI ANTONIO (RED SONJA)
BEGINNING IN AUGUST 2009
DYNAMITE ENTERTAINMENT
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